

1 5. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the connection-oriented
2 network protocol comprises the Transmission Control Protocol (TCP).

1 6. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the intermediary device
2 comprises at least one of a firewall and a boundary controller.

1 7. A method for negotiating multi-path connections between a
2 plurality of intermediary devices in a networked computing environment,
3 comprising:

4 establishing a client-side connection between a requesting client and an
5 intermediary device available from a plurality of intermediary devices on a
6 primary communications channel in accordance with a connection-oriented
7 network protocol;

8 establishing a server-side connection between the intermediary device and
9 the requested server on a primary communications channel in accordance with the
10 connection-oriented network protocol;

11 determining differences in connection parameters defined for the client-
12 side connection and the server-side connection; and

13 communicating the connection parameter differences to at least one other
14 such intermediary device over an out-of-band communications channel.

1 8. A method according to Claim 7, further comprising:

2 communicating a service request initially received from the requesting
3 client to the at least one other such intermediary device while establishing the
4 client-side connection over the out-of-band communications channel.

1 9. A method according to Claim 7, further comprising:

2 deferring communicating the connection parameter differences for
3 transitory connections.

1 10. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the out-of-band
2 communications channel comprises at least one of a broadcast, multicast, or
3 point-to-point channel.

1 11. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the connection-oriented
2 network protocol comprises the Transmission Control Protocol (TCP).

1 12. A computer-readable storage medium holding code for performing
2 the method of Claim 7.

1 13. A system for communicating routing information between a
2 plurality of link layer intermediary devices in a networked computing
3 environment, comprising:
4 a link layer intermediary device available from a plurality of link layer
5 intermediary devices receiving a session packet from a requesting client;
6 an encapsulation module generating an echo request packet identified as
7 originating from the requesting client and addressed to a requested server and
8 encapsulating the session packet within the echo request packet;
9 the link layer intermediary device forwarding the echo request packet to
10 the requested server;
11 at least one other such link layer intermediary device receiving an echo
12 response packet from the requested server;
13 an unencapsulation module unencapsulating session packet from within
14 the echo response packet and retrieving routing information from the session
15 packet; and
16 the least one other such link layer intermediary device forwarding a
17 response packet to the requesting client.

1 14. A system according to Claim 13, wherein the echo request packet
2 is an Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) echo request packet and the echo
3 response packet is an ICMP echo response packet.

